

## **Work Experience Policy**

### **Rationale**

St. Cuana's National School has always welcomed student teachers from third level teaching institutions, transition year students from secondary schools and Special Needs Assistants seeking work experience. In recent years, however, the number of applicants for various types of teaching practice and of work experience has greatly increased.

Given the increased popularity of our school being elected by student teachers and students looking for work experience placements, there was a need to review and amend our policy to cater for the needs of students while commensurately respecting the school's decision of having a certain quota of students.

This policy was formulated as a result of consultation with staff and members of the Board of Management. The school recognises its obligation to share best educational practice with those seeking to gain experience and will host students in accordance with the capacity of the school to accommodate such students and in accordance with the willingness and availability of teachers to accommodate them.

However, the first consideration must be the needs of the pupils in St. Cuana's National School, Kilcoona. All students seeking work experience must respect the ethos of our school and adhere to the child safeguarding procedures which are in place.

We generally expect three types of application for work experience:

1. Third Level and Teaching Practice Placements
2. Transition Year Work Experience Placements
3. Special Needs Assistant Placements

The following are the procedures under which the above outlined categories work experience can take place.

### **Places will be given on a priority basis for each category...**

- **Third Level and Teaching Practice Placements**
  - Past Pupils of the school
  - Children/siblings of current staff
  - Family Members of Current and Past Staff Members
- **Transition Year Work Experience Placements**
  - Past pupil of the school.
  - Sibling of a student attending the school.
  - Son or daughter of current staff member.

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### ○ **Special Needs Assistant Placements**

Given the sensitivity and confidentiality that goes with this placement each application will be considered on a case by case basis.

- Only one participant at a time will be accepted on a work experience programme, except in exceptional circumstances.
- Applications for work experience should be made in writing using the appendices attached to this policy, well in advance of the dates being requested. Students should specify their main area of interest (eg; teaching, childcare, special needs, administration etc).
- Students must be fully insured while in the school by their respective college or school.
- Persons who request a voluntary position in the school, for the purposes of building up work experience, must be Garda vetted prior to commencing their placement.
- The Principal and staff will endeavour to ensure that the time spent in the school by the student is beneficial and a positive learning experience.
- Students must at all times be respectful of all members of staff, Board of Management, parents and pupils – their actions and language while in the school must be exemplary and of a professional nature at all times.
- Students will be provided with copies of policies which are deemed necessary and appropriate for their work within the school and are expected to co-operate with the general rules, procedures and organisational policies of the school.
- Students should be willing to follow the instruction/guidance of the Principal and staff member who has been designated to supervise their duties.
- All matters pertaining to the staff, Board of Management, Parents Council, pupils or parents within the school community must be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Any breach of this requirement will be seen as a serious matter and your work experience may be terminated.

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- Any breaches of discipline observed among the pupils must be reported to one of the teaching staff and not dealt with by the student themselves.
- The pupils and staff will be expected to treat students on work experience programmes with respect at all times.
- Teachers must remain with the student teacher in the classroom while lessons are being taught.
- Teachers reserve the right to accept or refuse student teachers.
- All supervisors of work experience students, who visit the school, including teaching practice supervisors, will be expected to adopt a positive and respectful attitude towards their students, in keeping with the school ethos of providing a positive learning and working environment.
- Duties can range from classroom assistant to office assistant to helping with any other task that is deemed suitable by the teacher, office staff or Principal.
- If a student wishes to leave the workplace during the school day, he/she must seek permission from the Principal in advance.
- St. Cuana's N.S. reserves the right to contact the college of the work experience student in order to ascertain whether that student is suitable for a placement in a primary school.
- All students must sign an agreement in advance of starting (see below). The agreement can be terminated at any time at the discretion of the Principal/Board of Management.
- A timetable will be drawn up for each student, but he/she will be expected to be flexible in how they work.
- Any absences must be notified in advance to the school.
- The dress code is 'smart casual' and must be a reflection of professionalism expected in the role.

NOTE: Should the school be given notice of a WSE (Whole School Evaluation) during the term of the work experience, the school reserves the right to cancel that placement.

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This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Signed: Tom Callanan  
Chairperson

This policy will be reviewed again in the year 2023 unless otherwise required.

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**Appendix A**  
**Application for Work Experience (Transition Year Students)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Secondary

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Proposed Work

Placement: \_\_\_\_\_

Past Pupil or Child/Sibling/relation of current staff member: Yes  No

I am interested in Primary School Teaching as a Career: Yes  No

I am studying Honours Irish for my Leaving Certificate Examination: Yes   
No

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: If you have ticked no to any of the above boxes, you are not eligible to apply*

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**Appendix B**

**Application for Student Teaching Practice/Placement**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Past Pupil or Child/Relation of current staff member:      Yes      No  

I am Garda vetted and an up to date copy of my Garda vetting is  
attached: Yes      No  

Dates of Teaching Placement/Practice \_\_\_\_\_

Class/Classes requested \_\_\_\_\_

It will depend on the following:

- St. Cuana's N.S. class allocation.
- The needs of the pupils in requested classes.
- The willingness of Class Teachers to accept students on placement.
- The availability of classes with Probated Teachers. (Classes with unprobated teachers cannot accept students).
- Whole School Evaluation notification.
- The number of students requesting placement. (First come first served basis).

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: If you have ticked no to any of the above boxes, you are not eligible to apply.*

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### **Education Provider Details**

Full Name and Address of Education Provider requiring completion of Teaching Practice /Placement

Phone Number Email

Work Placement Co-Ordinator Contact Details for Work Placement Co-ordinator

An official letter from the education provider outlining details of the applicant's requirements to complete a work teaching practice/placement is attached.

Please circle Yes                      No

**Appendix C**

**Application for Special Needs Assistant Placements**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Course and Institution providing the course

\_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Proposed Work

Placement: \_\_\_\_\_

Past Pupil or Child/Sibling of current staff member: Yes  No

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

*Given the sensitivity and confidentiality that goes with this placement each application will be considered on a case by case basis.*



**Appendix D**

**Work Experience Agreement**

I agree to participate in a work experience programme in Kilcoona N.S. on the following dates:

\_\_\_\_\_.

I agree to be in the school by 8.40 am and to remain until 2.30pm each day.

I agree to perform whatever duties are assigned to me to the best of my ability.

I understand the requirements in relation to my duties, the school's dress code and the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

I also understand that breaching these requirements will be seen as a serious matter and that in some circumstances my work experience may be terminated.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Experience Student

Date: \_\_\_\_\_